Women and Child Development especially to target prevention of child marriages in the forthcoming festival season of Akshaya Teej.

* During 2002-03 and 2003-04, the National Commission for Women launched Bal Vivah Virodh Abhiyan and in 2004-05 the Commission has asked the State Governments to take steps to curb child marriages. The Commission is also collaborating with State Governments and State Women Commissions for launching the Bal Vivah Virodh Abhiyan and putting efforts to generate awareness against this social evil.

(d) and (e) The proposal for amendment to the Child Marriage (Restraint) Act 1929, among others, include strict punishment for offenders.

New assessment system for Maths

2690. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has decided to introduce a new assessment system for maths;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the CBSE is considering to introduce a comprehensive grading system for Board examinations; and

(d) if so, by when?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) and (b) As per the information furnished by Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), the internal assessment scheme in Maths will be introduced at class IX from the academic year 2005-06 and at Class X from the academic year 2006-07. The first batch of Class X students will appear in examinations under this new scheme, in March 2007. The salient features of the scheme are as follows:-

(1) The CBSE has made the concept of mathematics laboratory compulsory in all its schools to facilitate effective learning of Mathematics.

(2) The initiative aims to remove the fear for the study of Mathematics

from the minds of children through improved pedagogy, hands-on practical skills.

(3) Experiential and inter disciplinary learning and continuous and comprehensive evaluation.

(4) 20 marks have been allotted to internal assessment for the practical and project work and 80 marks for the final examination in Class IX and X.

(c) and (d) As informed by the CBSE, the proposal to introduce the grading at the secondary examinations of the Board is under their active consideration and no time frame has been fixed for introduction of the grading system.

Adulterated mid-day meal

2691. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are reports that the mid-day meal supplied to Government schools are polluted or adulterated;

(b) if so, who is responsible for this and what action has been taken to prevent it;

(c) Government's plan to give contract to such an agency/organization who are capable of providing standard food to ensure health of the children; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) A few such instances come to notice from time to time.

(b) Such incidents usually take place due to negligence of persons responsible for the programme at the local level. Whenever any such incident comes to notice, State Government concerned is requested to take remedial action to prevent its recurrence. Also, revised guidelines issued for the Scheme in December, 2004, contain detailed provisions for maintenance of hygiene and quality standards.

(c) and (d) Above Guidelines envisage that responsibility for cooking